

# KEY ROLE FOR SA TECH IN DEFENCE

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Australia's military will use cutting-edge, Adelaide-designed satellites for tactical communications and data transmission in far-flung areas, as Lot Fourteen-based Fleet Space Technologies makes its first foray into the defence industry with a multimillion-dollar contract.

Under the \$6.4m contract, Fleet will supply Defence with next-generation commercial satellites that enable secure communications between forces in areas where connectivity is "limited".

Fleet co-founder Matt Pearson said the project was "only the beginning" of its Defence involvement.

"We envision Australian satellites supporting national security across land, air, sea and space by connecting our people, our assets and by enabling radical ideas in autonomy and emerging technologies," Mr Pearson said.

Fleet's "low Earth orbit" satellites, operating about 580km from Earth, are predominantly used in the mining and mineral exploration sectors.

Professor Andy Koronios, chief executive of SmartSat which is collaborating on the project, said that the same technology would be repurposed for sensitive Defence communications.

Since it was founded in 2015, Fleet has grown to become one of the country's leading space companies. It made history in 2018 when it launched Australia's first commercial nano-satellites.